

Reforming our broken welfare system was the right thing to do. Now we must finish the job. Today I am pleased to unveil the final rules that will carry out the welfare reform bill I signed into law in 1996. This major new regulation does two important things. First, it enforces strict State work requirements and holds States accountable for moving people from the welfare rolls to the workplace. Second, the new regulation makes it easier for States to use their welfare block grant to pay for child care, for transportation, for job retention services, to help people who have left welfare stay off the rolls and help families from going on welfare in the first place.

This regulation says loud and clear: People ought to get paychecks, not welfare checks. But to finish the job on welfare reform, we must press on in our efforts to restore responsibility and make work a way of life again for all Americans. Now, in this time of great prosperity, with our economy booming and our confidence high, we can't afford to leave anyone behind.

One of the biggest obstacles facing all working families is finding child care they can afford and trust. I'm pleased that the Senate recently approved with bipartisan support significant new funding to help low income families pay for child care. I hope Congress takes this critical step to give America's working families the support they need to thrive. Frankly, I hope they will also pass the rest of my child care proposal to give tax credits and other support to working families. That will help more people move from welfare to work and stay off welfare.

Finally, we can't finish the job of welfare reform without doing more to help people who have the hardest time moving from welfare to work, those who live in the poorest neighborhoods and have the poorest job skills. That's why I call on Congress to pass my plan to extend the Labor Department's Welfare to Work program and to fully fund my proposal to provide transportation grants and housing vouchers that will help more Americans leave welfare behind by getting from where they are to where the jobs are.

With these steps, we can make the legacy of welfare dependency a memory of the 20th

century and build a community of work and responsibility in the 21st century.

Thank for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:50 p.m. on April 9 in the administrative offices of Memorial Hall in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Joint Statement by President Bill Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji

April 10, 1999

On the occasion of the signing of the Agreement on U.S. China Agricultural Cooperation, President Bill Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji reaffirmed that the United States and the People's Republic of China have advanced substantially their common goal of China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). This Agreement and the significant consensus achieved on a broad range of market access and Protocol issues have further advanced that goal. President Clinton and Premier Zhu welcome this significant progress. The United States strongly supports the accession of the People's Republic of China to the WTO in 1999. Therefore, President Clinton and Premier Zhu instruct their trade ministers to continue bilateral negotiations in order to satisfactorily resolve the important remaining issues and reach agreement on strong commercial terms as soon as possible.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Observance of Orthodox Easter

April 11, 1999

I wish to send a warm message of greetings today to the 6 million Orthodox Christian Americans and the quarter-billion Orthodox Christians around the world, as they gather to proclaim that "Christ has Risen."

I know the feeling of joy that comes on Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the miracle of Jesus' Resurrection and His gift to

us of eternal life. Yet I also understand that on this particular Easter Sunday, the joy Orthodox Christians feel may be mixed with other emotions: with sadness over the tragic events in and around Kosovo; and with fear for those whose lives may still be in danger. The majority of those forced from Kosovo in the last 2 weeks are Muslim, but among them are Catholics and Orthodox Christians, too. Our hearts and prayers must go out to all who have suffered. We hope and pray for the restoration of peace and a resolution based on democracy and tolerance.

On this holiest of days, when Orthodox Christians celebrate the triumph of life over death, of hope over despair, let us recommit to seeking peace, human rights, and an end to suffering for people around the world.

**Remarks to the Community at
Barksdale Air Force Base in
Bossier City, Louisiana**

April 12, 1999

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Secretary Cohen and General Shelton for their truly outstanding leadership on behalf of our Nation's military. They are eloquent and profound representatives of what is best about this country, and I thank them.

I want to thank Senator Breaux, Senator Landrieu, Representative McCrery for their support for you and for our country. I would like to acknowledge in the audience today, or here with us, are other Members of Congress: Congressmen Bill Jefferson and Chris John from Louisiana; and Congressman Thornberry and Congressman Sandlin, who come from the neighboring State of Texas to be with us. So I thank all of them for their support.

I would like to thank the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Mike Ryan, for coming down here with me; the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Whitt Peters; my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger. We also have the FEMA Director here, James Lee Witt, because, you know, you've had some pretty tough natural disasters here recently, and we're here doing double duty.

And General Marcotte and General Smoak, thank you for welcoming me here and for giving me the chance to meet with some of the fine people with whom you work who have also been involved in our work over Kosovo.

I thank the adjutant general, Bennett Landreneau, who is representing Governor Foster; Treasurer Ken Duncan; and the mayor of Bossier City, George Dement; and the mayor of Shreveport, Keith Hightower, for coming to meet me as well.

Now, the nice thing about speaking last is that everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everyone has said it. [*Laughter*] What I would like to do is to be just serious for a moment and first thank all the previous speakers for what they have said and try to put this in some larger context.

The conflict in Kosovo in which we are involved is really about two things: first, what you know and see every night—all those hundreds of thousands of innocent people uprooted, many of them killed, some of them dying from disease in refugee camps, some families divided forever—not because of anything they did, but because they happen to be Albanian instead of Serbian; Muslim instead of Orthodox Christian. It is a human tragedy that touches everyone.

But there is a second issue here, as well, and that is whether we and our allies in Europe are going to allow that kind of problem—hatred based on race or ethnicity or religion—to be the defining force of the next 20 or 30 years. In other words, whether we're going to go into the 21st century, this great modern time, where all our kids can do amazing things on the Internet, where all of our planes can do amazing things with high technology, and have all of the tools of the modern world put at the service of the most primitive hatreds known to man, or whether our European allies—18 other countries in NATO and their friends and sympathizers across Europe—will stay united with us, and with our neighbors to the north in Canada, and say, "We would like the 21st century to be different for our children. We would like to nip this conflict in the bud before it destabilizes all of Europe. We would like to see us make a statement that we don't want the 21st century to be defined, and we don't want